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Implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2258 (2015) and 2332 (2016)

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report is the forty-first submitted pursuant to paragraph 17 of Security Council resolution 2139 (2014), paragraph 10 of resolution 2165 (2014), paragraph 5 of resolution 2191 (2014), paragraph 5 of resolution 2258 (2015) and paragraph 5 of resolution 2332 (2016), in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to report, every 30 days, on the implementation of the resolutions by all parties to the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic.

2. The information contained herein is based on the data available to United Nations agencies, from the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and from other Syrian and open sources. Data from United Nations agencies on their humanitarian deliveries have been reported for the period from 1 to 30 June 2017.

Box 1
Key points in June 2017

(1) The memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic, signed by Iran (Islamic Republic of), the Russian Federation and Turkey on 4 May, continued to show a positive trend of reducing violence; however, hostilities have continued to be reported, especially in Dar'a and eastern Ghutah, and in areas held by Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

(2) Only three inter-agency cross-line convoys were dispatched in June. Of these, only one, a convoy to east Harasta, Misraba and Mudayra on 19 June, reached a besieged area. As at the end of June, the United Nations had reached some 202,500 people under the convoy plan for June and July, which constitutes only 18 per cent of the 1,081,900 beneficiaries requested to be reached.

(3) Since the offensive began in the city of Raqqah on 6 June, heavy clashes, shelling and air strikes have resulted in significant civilian casualties and injuries as tens of thousands of people fled. The number of people displaced across the north-east of the country by the offensive continued to grow, with 19,889 people displaced during June.

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(4) As a result of recently signed local agreements, both Madaya in Rif Dimashq Governorate and the Wa'r neighbourhood of the city of Homs were removed from the list of besieged locations in June. Consequently, there are now 11 besieged locations, with 540,000 people in total remaining besieged. Although fewer areas are now besieged, the change is not wholly positive, as sieges are often lifted following periods of severe restrictions and heavy bombardment, and those leaving besieged areas often move to other areas of the country where they continue to face hardship.

(5) On 17 June, an inter-agency convoy to east Harasta, Misraba and Mudayra in Rif Dimashq Governorate came under sniper fire, leaving a driver injured, even though all deconfliction measures were in place.

II. Major developments

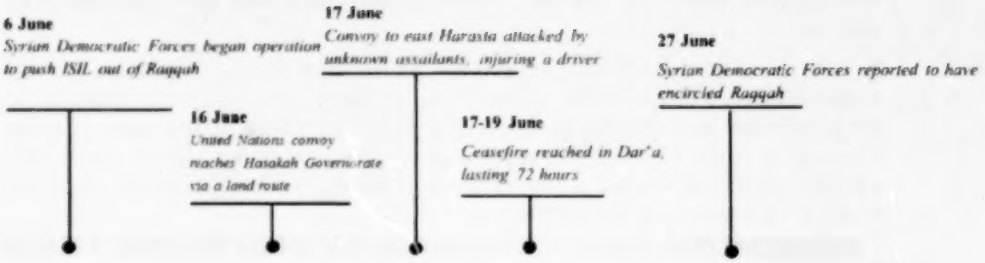
3. The memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic, signed by Iran (Islamic Republic of), the Russian Federation and Turkey on 4 May, continued to have a positive effect of reducing violence in some areas. Nevertheless, hostilities continued to be reported in proposed de-escalation areas, especially in Dar'a and eastern Ghutah. Military operations also increasingly shifted towards ISIL-held areas. The Syrian Democratic Forces, backed by the international coalition led by the United States of America to counter ISIL, encircled the ISIL-held city of Raqqah. Meanwhile, pro-government forces intensified their advance in Raqqah, Homs and Dayr al-Zawr Governorates. On 18 June, the international counter-ISIL coalition shot down a Syrian military aircraft in Raqqah Governorate, resulting in the Russian Federation temporarily suspending its deconfliction mechanism with the United States.

4. Since the offensive began in Raqqah on 6 June, heavy clashes, shelling and air strikes have resulted in significant civilian casualties and injuries as tens of thousands of people fled. During June, the humanitarian situation deteriorated in the city, where an estimated 30,000 to 50,000 people remain trapped. Initial reports indicate that, as at 27 June, the Syrian Democratic Forces had encircled the city, leaving no formal exit routes for civilians. Families are reportedly taking significant risks to exit the city across conflict lines.

5. The situation inside the city is reportedly dire. Civilians continue to be killed by air and ground strikes, with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) reporting that at least 173 people were killed in June alone. Some 27 civilians were killed and dozens more wounded at the Euphrates River while attempting to gain access to water. Scarcity of food and medicine continued to be reported. Markets and bakeries have remained closed, further limiting access to food and basic necessities.

6. The number of people displaced across the north-east of the country by the Raqqah offensive continued to grow, with 19,889 people displaced during June, many of whom more than once. To date, the total number of persons internally displaced since the onset of the offensive in November 2016 is 227,610, including 190,081 since 1 April 2017 alone. Daily arrivals were registered at the Mabrukah and Ayn Isa sites. Spontaneous settlements have also emerged and receded in line with the evolution of the security situation and advances by the Syrian Democratic Forces. Those who have been displaced continue to face protection concerns inside the camps relating to the screening process with personal identification taken for sometimes long periods, restrictions on movement and the confiscation of identity documents.

Figure I
Key dates in June 2017


6 June
Syrian Democratic Forces began operation to push ISIL out of Raqqah
16 June
United Nations convoy reaches Hasakah Governorate via a land route
17 June
Convoy to east Harasta attacked by unknown assailants, injuring a driver
17-19 June
Ceasefire reached in Dar'a, lasting 72 hours
27 June
Syrian Democratic Forces reported to have encircled Raqqah

Box 2
Land route from Damascus to Qamishli

(1) Qamishli has long been an essential United Nations hub for providing humanitarian assistance to hundreds of thousands of people in the north-east of the Syrian Arab Republic. Nevertheless, access has been more challenging since December 2015, when Turkey closed its border crossing point for security reasons, which it stated was temporary. In July 2016 the World Food Programme (WFP) logistics cluster began to airlift food and humanitarian supplies from Damascus to Qamishli for distribution. Between July 2016 and 25 June 2017, when the airlift operation was phased out, 533 airlifts were completed, transporting 18,857 tons of food, water and sanitation, nutrition, education, shelter and non-food item assistance on behalf of humanitarian actors, reaching nearly 400,000 people.

(2) In March 2017, in the light of the improved security environment, the United Nations requested the Government to consider approving the delivery of cross-line convoys to Hasakah Governorate, through a land route that runs from Aleppo via Manbij to Qamishli. By May, commercial traffic began moving again from Aleppo to Qamishli using this route.

(3) On 14 June, the Government responded positively to a United Nations request to deliver assistance to Qamishli. Following the approval, a three-truck WFP convoy was deployed on 14 June, arriving on 16 June. A total of 32 trucks from WFP and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reached Qamishli by the end of June.

(4) Replacing the current airlift operation with land access to Hasakah is expected to save an estimated $19 million per year, enough to provide an additional 100,000 people with food assistance for a year.

7. The situation in Dar'a remained of particular concern for the 660,000 people in need in the governorate, with active conflict continuing even though Dar'a is one of the four de-escalation areas identified by the guarantors of the memorandum on de-escalation. The ongoing fighting notwithstanding, government forces declared a cessation of hostilities for 48 hours, beginning at noon on 17 June, to support local agreement negotiations; however, non-State armed opposition groups reportedly refused to comply with the cessation of hostilities, leading to renewed fighting.

8. The situation in eastern Ghutah continued to be marked by fighting among non-State armed opposition groups operating in the area, despite the area being one

of the four de-escalation areas identified by the guarantors of the memorandum on de-escalation. Shelling into eastern Ghutah was also reported to have continued throughout the month, resulting in civilian casualties. At the same time, shelling from eastern Ghutah by non-State armed opposition groups into Damascus was reported.

9. A team of United Nations experts was invited by the guarantors of the memorandum on de-escalation to attend part of the third technical-level session of the guarantors' joint working group on de-escalation in Moscow on 15 and 16 June. The experts were afforded the opportunity to highlight issues of interest to the United Nations and offered to continue to provide technical advice, where required, within the parameters of the Astana talks.

Protection

10. Air and ground-based strikes continued to kill and injure civilians in significant numbers. As in the past, the high level of civilian casualties remains a strong indication that violations of the prohibition on launching indiscriminate attacks and of the principles of proportionality and precaution are continuing. Children have been particularly affected by the fighting and, in some incidents, constituted the majority of the casualties.

11. Fighting continued to affect civilian infrastructure, including medical personnel and facilities, schools, markets and places of worship. On the basis of information received by OHCHR, civilian casualties, in possible violation of international humanitarian law, occurred in various governorates (see annex). OHCHR documented alleged incidents by many parties to the conflict, including government forces and their allies, non-State armed opposition groups and Security Council-designated terrorist groups.

12. The United States Department of Defense publicly confirmed that, in June, the international counter-ISIL coalition had carried out 870 strikes against ISIL targets in Raqqah, Hasakah, Dayr al-Zawr and Homs Governorates. Of those strikes, 637 were reported to have been in Raqqah Governorate. On 6 June, it announced the launch of an offensive to liberate Raqqah, with the coalition providing equipment, training, intelligence, logistics support, precision fires missiles and battlefield advice to the Syrian Democratic Forces.

13. The Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation issued statements on 9, 27 and 30 June, saying that it was continuing to support the Syrian Arab Republic in the fight against ISIL and the Nusrah Front. The statements also provided information on successes in the north-east of Aleppo Governorate, near Tadmur (Palmyra), and in the south of the country and on operations along the borders with Jordan and Iraq.

14. On 19 June, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard publicly announced that it had launched ballistic missiles against ISIL targets in eastern Dayr al-Zawr Governorate in response to the ISIL attack against the Iranian Parliament and the mausoleum of Ruhollah Khomeini in Tehran on 7 June.

15. The United Nations and health partners received credible reports of four attacks that affected health-care facilities and personnel in June, of which two have been verified and two are being verified. The two verified attacks were against health staff. On 6 June, a nurse working for a local hospital in Dar'a was killed, along with his son, when an air strike hit his home. On 17 June, a paramedic working for a hospital supported by national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) was reportedly killed by an air strike on his way to work.

16. Educational facilities continued to be affected. On 14 June, in the town of Tafas, in the western rural area of Dar'a, air strikes hit adjacent school buildings Shahid Keywan C1 and Shahid Najjar. At least 9 people, including two children, were killed and 25 injured in the attacks. The buildings were being used as shelters for internally displaced persons at the time. On 24 June, an NGO tent, used as a "safe learning place" in the Nakhla area of the city of Dar'a, was hit by an air strike, destroying the tent, damaging the desks and undermining the functioning of the facility.

Humanitarian access

Box 3
Key points for humanitarian access

(1) Some 13.5 million people in the Syrian Arab Republic, including 6.3 million internally displaced persons, remain in need of humanitarian assistance. An estimated 3.9 million people live in hard-to-reach areas and another 540,000 are currently besieged in 11 areas.

(2) With a convoy to east Harasta, Misraba and Mudayra on 17 June, one besieged area was reached through United Nations inter-agency cross-line operations during the reporting cycle, beyond Dayr al-Zawr (reached through airdrops). Two more inter-agency convoys were dispatched to hard-to-reach locations, reaching Talbisah and Tulul al-Humr on 15 June and Rastan on 22 June. Removal of medical supplies from the convoys remains a major challenge, with supplies sufficient for more than 84,000 treatments removed in June.

(3) As at the end of June, the United Nations had reached some 202,500 people under the June/July convoy plan, which constitutes 18 per cent of the 1,081,900 beneficiaries requested to be reached. Other inter-agency convoys could not proceed owing to a lack of approvals, including the lack of facilitation letters by the Syrian authorities; fighting and insecurity; and other administrative restrictions after initial approvals.

(4) Some 712,000 people received food assistance and hundreds of thousands received medical assistance, water and sanitation support, education support and other non-food items from the United Nations and partners through cross-border operations from Turkey and Jordan.

(5) The United Nations and partners continue to respond to the humanitarian impact of the fighting and insecurity in and around Raqqah, reaching more than 240,000 people with some form of assistance on a monthly basis. Humanitarian assistance includes various types of food and daily rations of bread, medicines and medical supplies, as well as nutrition supplies.

17. The delivery of humanitarian assistance to people in need remained extremely challenging in many areas as a result of active conflict, shifting conflict lines, administrative impediments and deliberate restrictions on the movement of people and goods by the parties to the conflict.

18. As a result of changes following the signing of local agreements, two locations — Madaya in Rif Dimashq Governorate and the Wa'r neighbourhood in the city of Homs — were removed from the list of besieged areas in June. Following an agreement reached as part of negotiations regarding the arrangement for the four towns of Fu'ah, Kafraya, Madaya and Zabadani, access has improved in Madaya. The United Nations conducted an assessment on 8 June and found that the 25,000-

30,000 civilians remaining in Madaya were able to move in and out of the town by public transportation and private vehicles. With regard to the Wa'r neighbourhood in the city of Homs, after reaching a local agreement in March, more than 19,000 people were evacuated from the area to Idlib, Jarabulus and northern rural Homs. On 20 May, the Governor of Homs announced that the evacuation process had been completed and that the area was again under government control, with an estimated 17,500 people remaining in the area. Although fewer areas are now besieged, the change is not wholly positive, as sieges are often lifted following the reaching of local agreements after periods of severe restrictions and heavy bombardment and those leaving besieged areas often move to other areas of the country where they continue to face hardship. The United Nations was not party to these local agreements.

19. There are now 11 besieged locations, with a total estimated population of 540,000 (see table 1). Of these, 7 are besieged by the Government (80 per cent of the total besieged population), 1 by both the Government and non-State armed opposition groups (1 per cent), 2 by non-State armed opposition groups (2 per cent) and 1 by ISIL (17 per cent).

Table 1
Besieged areas, June 2017

Governorate	*Location*	*Estimated population*	*Besieged by*
Dayr al-Zawr	Dayr al-Zawr	93 500	ISIL
Damascus	Yarmouk	9 800	Government forces and non-State armed opposition groups
Idlib	Fu'ah	12 100	Non-State armed opposition groups
	Kafraya		Non-State armed opposition groups
Rif Dimashq	Qabun and Barzah al-Balad	30 000	Government forces
	Duma area (Duma, Shaffuniyah, Hawsh al-Dawahirah)	150 100	Government forces
	Harasta area (Harasta, Mudayra, Misraba)	46 300	Government forces
	Irbin and surrounding area (Irbin, Zamalka and Jawbar)	49 300	Government forces
	Kafr Batna area (Kafr Batna, Ayn Tarma, Hammurah, Jisrayn, Saqba, Aftris, Hazzah, Hawsh al-Ash'ari, Bayt Siwa, Muhammadiyah)	132 400	Government forces
	Nashabiyah area (Nashabiyah, Bayt Nayim, Salhiyah, Utaya, Hazrama)	16 500	Government forces
Total		**540 000**	

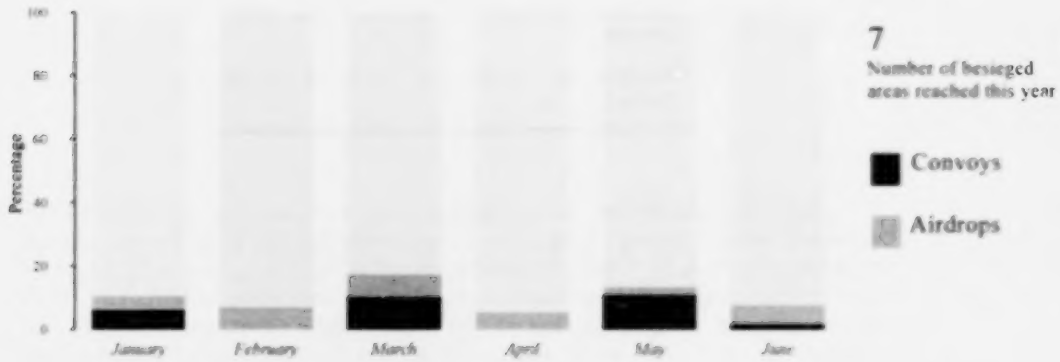
20. Access for the United Nations and its partners to those living in besieged and hard-to-reach locations remains a critical concern. Under the United Nations inter-agency convoy plan for June and July, access was requested to 27 locations,

including besieged areas, with the aim of reaching 1,081,900 people. Access to 836,750 beneficiaries (77.3 per cent) has been approved thus far. There were 3 locations to which access was approved in full, while access to another 23 was approved with either a lower number of beneficiaries in need than those identified by the United Nations or without a specified number of beneficiaries to be reached. One request was denied. Thus far, it has been possible to dispatch only three inter-agency convoys to besieged and hard-to-reach locations under the inter-agency convoy plan for June and July (see table 4).

21. Individual agencies continued to submit requests for single-agency deliveries to locations across the country. WFP submitted 1,587 official requests to obtain facilitation letters to transport food assistance to targeted locations across the country, while UNHCR submitted 84 such requests for the movement of core relief items and livelihoods kits, the large majority of which were approved. Both international and Syrian NGOs continued to perform needs assessments and provide support, including medical, education, psychosocial and protection services, in besieged and hard-to-reach locations, under extremely challenging circumstances and in accordance with humanitarian principles.

Figure II

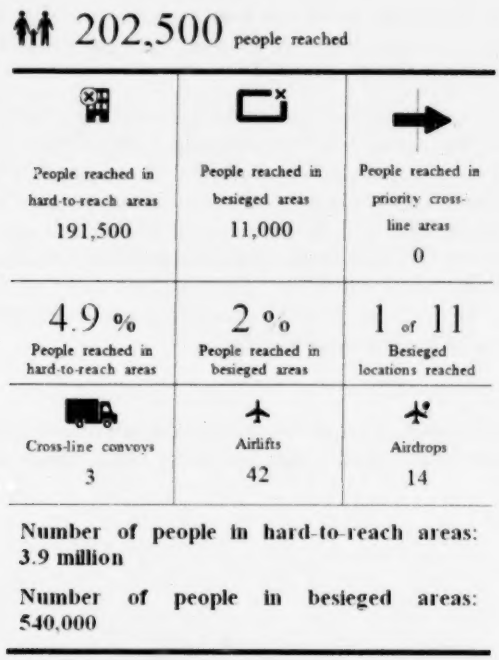
United Nations inter-agency cross-line humanitarian operations: percentage of people reached each month in besieged areas, including via airdrops to the city of Dayr al-Zawr



22. The majority of United Nations agencies and United Nations partners continue to be unable to reach populations in need in areas controlled by ISIL, as all plans to deliver assistance to those areas have been suspended owing to continued security concerns. This has prevented the United Nations and its humanitarian partners from reaching the city of Raqqah and most of Dayr al-Zawr Governorate, as well as pockets of northern rural Aleppo and north-western rural Hama.

23. With the opening of the land route to Qamishli, Hasakah and Raqqah Governorates became more easily accessible. Consequently, food for more than 190,000 people was dispatched to partners for distribution, achieving 100 per cent of the monthly plan for Hasakah Governorate. Moreover, the United Nations and its partners have been responding to the humanitarian needs of displaced persons affected by the hostilities in Raqqah Governorate. Humanitarian response efforts are taking place across Raqqah, Aleppo and Dayr al-Zawr Governorates, reaching more than 240,000 people with some form of assistance on a monthly basis. Humanitarian assistance includes various types of food and daily rations of bread, medicines and medical supplies, as well as nutrition supplies.

Figure III
United Nations inter-agency cross-line humanitarian operations by land, June 2017



24. Life-saving and life-sustaining medical items sufficient for more than 84,000 treatments were removed from inter-agency convoys in June by the Syrian authorities (see table 2). Additional medical supplies were scheduled to be delivered as part of the monthly inter-agency convoy plan, but only three convoys have been able to proceed thus far during the June/July cycle. Furthermore, since the beginning of 2017, the World Health Organization (WHO) has submitted nine single-agency requests to the Government to have access to 12 locations in six governorates. The Government approved three requests, five remain unanswered and one has been rejected.

Table 2
Medical supplies removed from humanitarian convoys in June 2017

Location	*Number of treatments*	*Type of supplies*
East Harasta, Misraba and Mudayra	8 895	Phenobarbitone, amitriptyline hydrochloride, haloperidol, gastro-resistant sodium valproate, ketamine hydrochloride, diagnostic ultrasound system, gelofusine, carbamazepine, beclomethasone nasal spray, atracurium
Talbisah and Tulul al-Humr	53 948	Latex examination gloves (small), minor surgery instruments and surgical kits, stainless steel instruments for minor surgery, heparine sodium, salbutamol, electrocardiograph, salbutamol sulphate inhaler, budesonide inhalation (aerosol), beclomethasone dipropionate, inhalation (aerosol), pneumonia type A kits (P97-023), ketorolac tromethamine, normal saline,

Location	*Number of treatments*	*Type of supplies*
		glucose 5 per cent, injection solution with IV giving set and needle
Rastan	21 238	Minor surgery instruments and surgical kits, stainless steel instruments for minor surgery, M7 diagnostic ultrasound system, beclomethasone dipropionate nasal spray, carbamazepine, pneumonia type A kits (P97-023), ketorolac tromethamine, normal saline with IV giving set, glucose 5 per cent, injection solution with IV giving set and needle

25. In June, WFP and UNHCR were able to successfully deploy a convoy from Aleppo through Manbij to Qamishli in Hasakah Governorate (see box 2). This important development will allow the United Nations to deliver at scale to the north-east of the country, an area that has required expensive airlifts as a result of the temporary closure of the Nusaybin/Qamishli crossing point with Turkey since December 2015.

26. Following the resumption of these regular land deliveries, the United Nations airlift operations launched in July 2016 to Qamishly were phased out on 25 June. By then, 533 rotations had been completed, airlifting 18,857 tons of food and other supplies, reaching some 400,000 people. In June alone, 42 rotations were completed, enabling the United Nations to dispatch food and other assistance to partners for 393,300 people living in parts of Hasakah, Raqqah and Dayr al-Zawr Governorates.

Humanitarian response

27. In June, United Nations humanitarian agencies and partners continued to reach millions of people in need through all modalities from within the Syrian Arab Republic and across its borders (see table 3). In addition, NGOs continued to deliver life-saving assistance. The Government continued to provide basic services to areas under its control and in many areas beyond its control. Local authorities in many areas controlled by non-State armed opposition groups also continued to provide services when possible.

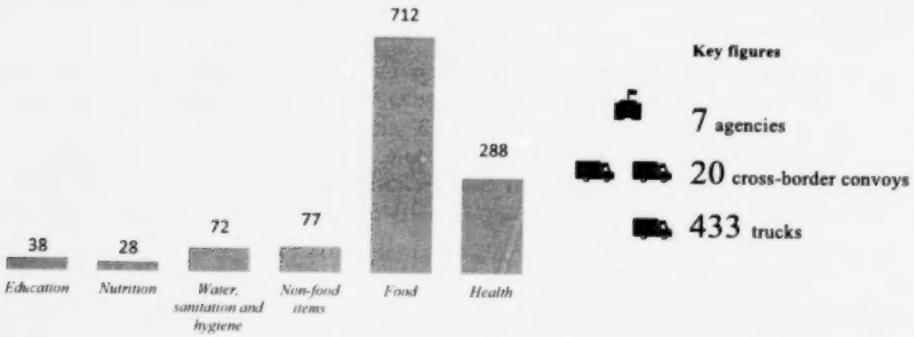
Table 3
People reached by the United Nations and other organizations, June 2017

Organization	*Number of people reached*
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	36 858
International Organization for Migration	130 000
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	231 991
United Nations Children's Fund	>1 500 000
United Nations Development Programme	3 868 669
United Nations Population Fund	29 000
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East	>250 000
World Food Programme	>4 000 0000
World Health Organization	1 633 765

28. Cross-border deliveries continued from Turkey and Jordan into the Syrian Arab Republic under the terms of Security Council resolutions 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2258 (2015) and 2332 (2016) (see fig. IV). In line with those resolutions, the United Nations notified the Syrian authorities in advance of each shipment, including content, destination and number of beneficiaries. The United Nations Monitoring Mechanism for the Syrian Arab Republic continued its operations, monitoring 433 trucks used in 20 convoys by seven United Nations entities in June, confirming the humanitarian nature of each and notifying the Syrian authorities after each shipment. The Mechanism continued to benefit from the excellent cooperation of the Governments of Jordan and Turkey.

Figure IV
Beneficiaries assisted by the United Nations and its partners per cluster through cross-border humanitarian deliveries, June 2017

(Thousands)



29. In June, WFP carried out 14 high-altitude airdrop rotations in Dayr al-Zawr Governorate, dropping food rations sufficient for 31,035 people and supplies from other humanitarian actors.

Table 4
Inter-agency cross-line humanitarian convoys, June 2017

Date	*Location*	*Requested target (number of beneficiaries)*	*Number of beneficiaries reached*	*Type of assistance*
15 June	Talbisah and Tulul al-Humr	101,000	84 000	Multisectoral
19 June	East Harasta, Misraba and Mudayra	33 000	11 000	Multisectoral
21/22 June	Rastan	107 500	107 500	Multisectoral

30. The total number of confirmed polio cases had reached 17 by 21 June, with 16 cases reported in the Mayadeen district in Dayr al-Zawr and 1 in Raqqah. The Ministry of Health, with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and WHO, implemented a first round of polio vaccinations on 22 June, reaching hundreds of thousands of children. Moreover, between late May and early June, UNICEF and WHO conducted a measles immunization campaign for children between the ages of 7 months and 5 years, reaching more than 1.7 million children.

31. On 22 June, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) concluded a second round of cash assistance for 2017, which had begun on 2 May, benefiting 409,547 Palestine refugees (122,576 families) across the Syrian Arab Republic. UNRWA also distributed food

parcels to 143,188 Palestine refugees and provided health treatments to 46,329 patients (18,991 men and 27,338 women) across the country.

32. Throughout the month, the Russian Federation sent information bulletins to the United Nations from the Russian Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic, which outlined the provision of bilateral relief assistance. Other Member States also continued to provide bilateral and other forms of humanitarian assistance.

Visas and registrations

33. A total of 30 new United Nations visa requests were submitted to the Government in June, of which 14 were approved and 16 remain outstanding. Of the new visa applications submitted in earlier months, a further 12 were approved in June, 1 was rejected and 21 remain pending. A total of 64 United Nations visa renewal requests were submitted in June, of which 40 were approved and 24 remain pending. A further 14 visa renewals submitted in earlier months were also approved, while 15 remain pending.

34. A total of 22 international NGOs are registered with the Government to operate in the country. Four international NGOs are completing registration. Those organizations continued to face administrative hurdles and restrictions affecting their ability to operate, including in gaining permission to undertake independent needs assessments. Some 217 national NGOs are authorized by the Syrian Arab Republic to partner with the United Nations.

Safety and security of humanitarian personnel and premises

35. On 17 June, an inter-agency convoy to east Harasta, Misraba and Mudayra in Rif Dimashq Governorate came under sniper fire, even though all deconfliction measures were in place between the Russian Federation and the international counter-ISIL coalition and the necessary approvals and guarantees of safe passage had been received from relevant parties on the ground. The attack injured a Syrian Arab Red Crescent driver, while another was hurt by a bullet but not seriously injured. No party has claimed responsibility for the attack, which, if directed intentionally against the humanitarian convoy and its personnel, constitutes a war crime.

36. On 15 June, dozens of protesters set fire to a police station in the city of Suwayda' in retaliation for the detention of a political activist. The demonstrations continued for two days before some leaders in the area intervened to calm the situation. On 18 June, an improvised explosive device detonated on Siyahah Street in the city of Qamishli, some 300 m from the UNHCR office, causing material damage. All UNHCR staff members were safe. The threat of improvised explosive devices and vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices is likely to persist, given the fighting in southern Hasakah and the ongoing offensive in Raqqah.

37. Since the beginning of the conflict, dozens of humanitarian workers have been killed, including 21 staff members of the United Nations, 17 of whom were UNRWA staff members, 65 staff members and volunteers of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent and eight staff members and volunteers of the Palestine Red Crescent Society. In addition, many staff members of international and national NGOs are reported to have been killed.

38. A total of 28 United Nations staff members, comprising 1 United Nations Development Programme staff member and 27 UNRWA staff members, are detained or missing.

III. Observations

39. With 13.5 million people in need of humanitarian assistance across the Syrian Arab Republic, the humanitarian crisis continues in most areas. The conflict continues to kill civilians and further destroy basic infrastructure. Access to health care, food, clean water and education continues to pose significant challenges to civilians. In too many cases, civilians risk their lives, adopting negative coping mechanisms to address their basic needs.

40. The United Nations and its humanitarian partners provide an essential lifeline to those in need. The deployment of cross-border assistance, ongoing airdrops to Dayr al-Zawr, the recent opening of a land route to Qamishli and the constant efforts to reach areas across conflict lines are all examples of the vital humanitarian work of the United Nations and its partners and adaptability to reach civilians trapped by the conflict. The opening of some ISIL-held areas to humanitarian assistance is a positive development. Nevertheless, too many civilians remain out of reach, despite all efforts. In particular, the 540,000 people who are besieged face dire circumstances. I call upon all parties to immediately end sieges so as to allow sustained humanitarian access and freedom of movement to those currently trapped. I remind all parties that the deliberate starvation of civilians as a method of warfare constitutes a serious violation of international humanitarian law and could amount to a war crime.

41. I remain deeply troubled by the situation on the ground for many civilians who suffer from the ongoing conflict. Explosive weapons continue to be fired into populated areas, indiscriminately killing and injuring civilians. I continue to reiterate my call for the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic to be referred to the International Criminal Court. I also call upon all Member States to support the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011.

42. The escalation of hostilities in the east and north-east is of particular concern, as the ongoing military operations against ISIL take their toll on civilians. This has come at the cost of civilian lives and, in some cases, the destruction of vital infrastructure. I reiterate my call upon all those conducting military operations in the Syrian Arab Republic to do so in compliance with international humanitarian law, in particular as it relates to the protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure. All efforts must be made to include a humanitarian concept of operations in all military planning.

43. It is crucial that the de-escalation of violence be achieved in the Syrian Arab Republic. I welcome the continued and persistent efforts of the guarantors in the Astana process towards de-escalation, the challenges and difficulties notwithstanding. Their efforts have resulted in a reduction of violence in some areas, but I remain concerned about the escalation of violence in Dar'a and eastern Ghutah. The reduction of violence must also hold in all four de-escalation areas and be further expanded. The creation of de-escalation areas must result in a sustained increase in humanitarian access. Such an increase was not seen in June. Further progress on issues regarding detainees and missing persons, and humanitarian demining, are also important. While also acknowledging the promise of de-escalation areas to reduce violence, I urge all countries to preserve the right of all Syrians to seek asylum and enjoy refugee protection until conditions are conducive for voluntary return in safety and in dignity.

44. Ultimately, the political process is the only course that can offer a lasting solution to the Syrian conflict and an end to the tremendous suffering of the people.

There is no military solution. The Geneva and Astana processes can complement each other, as the formal United Nations-facilitated intra-Syrian negotiations can be enabled by more conducive conditions on the ground as a result of the de-escalation efforts by the Astana guarantors. I fully support the continued efforts of my Special Envoy for Syria through the intra-Syrian talks and I urge the Syrian parties to constructively address the four baskets, namely, governance issues, constitutional issues, electoral issues and issues relating to counter-terrorism and security governance. I remind the international community of the importance of fully implementing all relevant Security Council resolutions, in particular resolutions 2254 (2015) and 2268 (2016).

Annex

Incidents affecting civilians recorded by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, June 2017[1]

Rif Dimashq and Damascus Governorates

- On 1 June, ground-based strikes hit the opposition-controlled area of Irbin, which reportedly resulted in the death of a woman.
- On 2 June, a civilian was allegedly shot in the opposition-held area of Mudayra while travelling towards Duma.
- Also on 2 June, a ground-based strike hit a residential area in opposition-controlled Ash'ari, allegedly killing a child and severely injuring a woman and her daughter who were displaced from Shub'ah.
- On 6 June, a ground-based strike hit a residential area in opposition-controlled Harasta, reportedly killing a boy and injuring several members in his family including his brother, mother and grandmother.
- Also on 6 June, a ground-based strike hit a residential building in Harasta, which reportedly killed a woman and injured her son.
- On 23 June, two successive air strikes hit a residential area in opposition-controlled Hazzah. The second air strike hit a building located in the vicinity of a local market and reportedly resulted in the death of 5 civilians, including three children, two from the same family, and the injury of at least 12 others, including women and children.

Dar'a Governorate

- On 1 June, two improvised explosive devices exploded on a road between Kafr Shams and Aqraba, hitting a convoy of opposition fighters. As both civilians and fighters came to provide assistance to the wounded, two ground strikes hit the location again, reportedly killing seven people, including three civilians from Kafr Shams, and injuring at least 10 other civilians.
- Also on 1 June, air strikes hit a residential area in opposition-controlled Dera'a camp, reportedly killing two civilians, including a boy from a family previously displaced from Qunaytirah.
- On 3 June, several ground-based strikes hit residential areas in government-controlled Dar'a, including Dar'a al-Mahattah, Sabil, Kashif and Sahhari, reportedly killing a civilian and leaving an unknown number injured.
- On 4 June, two civilians were allegedly killed and several others wounded in ground-based strikes that hit a residential area in the opposition-controlled village of Tafas.

[1] In line with Security Council resolution 2258 (2015), the present description of developments on the ground, and the incidents during the month that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has been able to corroborate, relates to the compliance with Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014) and 2191 (2014) by all parties in the Syrian Arab Republic. The information is provided without prejudice to the work of the Task Force on the Ceasefire of the International Syria Support Group. The reporting is not a comprehensive listing of all violations of international humanitarian law and violations and abuses of international human rights law that took place in the Syrian Arab Republic during the reporting period.

- Also on 4 June, four air strikes hit a residential area in the town of Ghariyah al-Gharbiyah. The attack allegedly killed two women and injured an unknown number of others.
- On 5 June, two air strikes reportedly hit a former government military facility being used to house internally displaced persons in Tafas, resulting in the death of seven civilians, including three internally displaced persons from Uthman, including a boy and a girl.
- Around 5 June, two successive air strikes hit a vehicle carrying civilians on the road between Tafas and Da'il, allegedly killing six, including a child.
- On 5 June, ground-based strikes hit a residential area in government-controlled Dar'a al-Mahattah, reportedly killing a girl and severely injuring a male civilian who then died the following day.
- On 7 June, air strikes hit a residential area in the opposition-controlled area of Tariq al-Sadd in the city of Dar'a, reportedly killing three civilians, including a man and a girl from a family previously displaced from Dar'a al-Balad.
- On 9 June, air strikes hit a residential area in opposition-controlled Dar'a al-Balad, reportedly killing a civilian and injuring an unknown number of others.
- On 10 June, ground-based strikes hit opposition-controlled Nasib, which resulted in the alleged death of a civilian male and his two children (a boy and a girl) and a grave injury to another boy from the same family who then died the following day.
- On 13 June, two civilians were reportedly killed and another severely injured when an improvised explosive device detonated on the road between opposition-controlled Da'il and Nawa. All three victims were internally displaced persons from the same family previously displaced from Tall Shihab.
- On the morning of 14 June, two air strikes hit a residential area in Tafas, allegedly damaging a school that served as a shelter for internally displaced persons from Dar'a Governorate. Eight civilians displaced from Uthman, including a girl and two women, in addition to a civilian from Tafas, were killed and an unknown number injured.
- Also on 14 June, ground-based strikes hit a residential area of Tafas, reportedly killing two civilians, one of whom was a girl.
- On 22 June, air strikes hit an informal settlement for internally displaced persons in Nasib, reportedly killing three civilians previously displaced from the Yarmouk Valley, in addition to leaving an unknown number of civilians injured.
- On 23 June, ground-based strikes hit a residential area in the government-controlled Kashif neighbourhood of Dar'a city, reportedly killing two civilians, one of whom was a woman.
- On 24 June, air strikes hit the town of Nasib between noon and 5.30 p.m., causing material damage and injuring internally displaced persons in the area.
- Also on 24 June, air strikes hit an informal settlement for internally displaced persons located near a market in Nasib, reportedly killing two civilians previously displaced from Dar'a al-Balad, one of whom was a woman. Another civilian severely injured in the strike allegedly died on 29 June.
- On 27 June, ground-based strikes hit a residential area near the Shahid al-Fakhouri School in opposition-controlled Harah, reportedly killing six

civilians, including a woman and four girls from a single family. At least 12 civilians, 5 of whom were children, were reportedly injured in the attack.

Aleppo Governorate

- On 18 June, a civilian was reportedly killed and two girls were injured as a result of ground-based strikes on the opposition-held town of Mari' in the northern rural area of the governorate.
- On 19 June, a civilian was allegedly killed and four others were injured when ground-based strikes hit the town of Mari'.

Idlib Governorate

- On 1 June, ground-based strikes hit residential areas in the town of Bdama, in rural Jisr al-Shughur, reportedly injuring a civilian.
- On 8 June, heavy armed clashes broke out in populated areas of the city of Ma'arrat al-Nu'man and allegedly resulted in the death of a 50-year-old street vendor.
- On 14 June, ground-based strikes hit residential areas on the outskirts of the city of Jisr al-Shughur, reportedly injuring four civilians, including a mother and her child.
- During the afternoon of 24 June, a car bomb exploded near a market in the city of Dana, north-east of Idlib, reportedly killing 7 civilians, including three children, and injuring at least 30 more.

Hama Governorate

- In the early morning of 5 June, air strikes hit the ISIL-held village of Abu Hawadid in the Uqayribat sub-district of eastern rural Hama, reportedly injuring a male civilian previously displaced from Talbisah in northern rural Homs and causing extensive material damage.
- In the early morning of 7 June, air strikes hit ISIL-held eastern Suha, reportedly killing a pregnant woman and her two children.
- On 15 June, ground-based strikes hit a residential area in the city of Lataminah in opposition-controlled northern rural Hama, reportedly injuring a child.
- On 17 June, air strikes hit a market in the ISIL-held village of Nu'aymah, located 2 km east of Uqayribat, reportedly killing at least three civilians and injuring others.
- On 22 June, ground-based strikes hit residential areas around Uqayribat, reportedly killing a male civilian and causing significant material damage. The strikes also reportedly resulted in the displacement of civilians.

Homs Governorate

- On 13 June, a 13-year-old boy was killed and another severely injured following the explosion of remnants of a cluster bomb in the village of Izz al-Din, in Talbisah in rural northern Homs.
- On 21 June, air strikes hit residential areas in the town of Kafr Laha, located in the area of Hula, reportedly killing a male civilian and injuring five other civilians.

- On 29 June, ground-based strikes hit residential areas in Talbisah, reportedly killing a female nurse and injuring at least five civilians, including a man whose hand was severed.
- Also on 29 June, a 40-year-old male civilian was shot in the head and killed while riding his motorcycle on the road linking the village of Ghantu to Talbisah.

Dayr al-Zawr Governorate

- On 1 June, ground-based strikes hit the government-controlled neighbourhoods of Qusur and Jurah in Dayr al-Zawr, allegedly killing two male civilians.
- On 4 June, air strikes hit the town of Muhsin in eastern rural Dayr al-Zawr and allegedly killed at least three civilians, including a girl and woman, and injured at least four others.
- On 7 June, air strikes hit a civilian vehicle travelling through the town of Qurayya in eastern rural Dayr al-Zawr, allegedly killing at least eight civilians and injuring four others.
- On 8 June, air strikes hit residential areas in the town of Ayyash, reportedly killing at least 3 civilians and injuring 10 others.
- On 9 June, at least one civilian was allegedly killed and three others were injured as a result of ground-based strikes on the Qusur and Jurah neighbourhoods of the city of Dayr al-Zawr.
- Also on 9 June, air strikes in the vicinity of a mosque in the village of Jadid Uqaydat allegedly killed 5 civilians and injured 11 others.
- On 10 June, a child and a woman were allegedly killed as a result of ground-based strikes that hit residential areas in the Qusur neighbourhood of the city of Dayr al-Zawr.
- On 15 June, air strikes hit residential areas in the village of Marrat, eastern Dayr al-Zawr, reportedly killing seven civilians, including four children and a woman.
- Also on 15 June, at least six civilians, including a woman and three children, were allegedly killed and at least four others injured as a result of air strikes on the village of Hatla, in the eastern rural area of Dayr al-Zawr.
- On 17 June, air strikes hit residential areas in the city of Mayadin, eastern Dayr al-Zawr, reportedly killing five civilians, including two children and a woman, and injuring at least seven others.
- During the afternoon of 20 June, air strikes hit residential areas in the village of Khusham, eastern Dayr al-Zawr, allegedly killing at least 14 civilians, including at least two women and two children, and injuring no fewer than 7 others.
- On 23 June, air strikes hit residential areas in the village of Muhaymidah, in the western rural part of Dayr al-Zawr, reportedly killing at least 11 civilians, including seven children and two women.
- On 24 June, ground-based strikes hit residential areas in the Qusur and Jurah neighbourhoods of Dayr al-Zawr city, reportedly killing at least five civilians and injuring several others.
- On 25 June, air strikes hit residential areas in the village of Muhsin, eastern Dayr al-Zawr, allegedly killing four children and their mother.

- Also on 25 June, a woman and child were reportedly killed when air strikes hit their home in the town of Qurayya in the eastern rural part of Dayr al-Zawr.
- At dawn on 26 June, air strikes hit and completely destroyed an ISIL-run place of detention located near a bridge in the town of Mayadin. Reports received indicated that at least 40 people, including ISIL members, had been killed in the strike.

Raqqah Governorate

- On 1 June, a male civilian was allegedly killed by a landmine north of the city of Raqqah.
- On 3 June, air strikes hit a residential area close to Jisr al-Jadid, south of the city of Raqqah, reportedly killing at least eight civilians, including a child, and injuring at least five others.
- Also on 3 June, at least 15 civilians were allegedly killed and 8 others injured when air strikes hit residential areas behind the Shira' swimming pool in the city of Raqqah.
- On 5 June, air strikes hit a boat that was reportedly carrying civilians from the northern to the southern banks of the Euphrates River. The boat was reportedly hit while it was at the southern access side of the city of Raqqah, allegedly killing 9 civilians and injuring at least 10 others.
- On 6 June, a man and his wife and their three children were allegedly killed when air strikes hit a residential building in the centre of the city of Raqqah.
- On 7 June, two children were reportedly killed when a landmine exploded close to them in the village of Ja'bar, in the west of the governorate.
- On 8 June, five children were allegedly killed when a landmine exploded in the village of Bougha in northern rural Raqqah. On the same day, two civilians were reportedly killed when a landmine exploded in the city of Tabaqah.
- Also on 8 June, air strikes hit the city of Raqqah, including the Mafraq al-Jazra neighbourhood on the west side of the city. At least 14 civilians were allegedly killed.
- On 10 June, at least 15 civilians, including four women and six children, were reportedly killed in air strikes that hit residential areas on Nur Street in Dariya, in the west of the governorate.
- Also on 10 June, ground-based strikes again hit residential areas in Dariya and allegedly killed at least two women and two children.
- Also on 10 June, air strikes hit residential areas in the Mukhtalatah area of the Sina'a neighbourhood, in the east of the city of Raqqah, reportedly killing at least six civilians, four of whom were children and two women.
- Also on 10 June, air strikes hit residential areas and reportedly killed seven civilians, including a woman, in the western neighbourhoods of Jazrah and Sabahiyah in the city of Raqqah.
- On 12 June, four civilians, including at least three children, were allegedly killed as a result of ground-based strikes on the Sayf al-Dawlah neighbourhood in the city of Raqqah.
- On 13 June, four civilians from one family, including two children, were allegedly killed when air strikes hit their home in the Qasr al-Banat area in the city of Raqqah.

- On 14 June, four civilians, including a woman, were reportedly killed as a result of ground-based strikes on the Sab' Bahrat area in the city of Raqqah.
- On 15 June, a woman and her four children were allegedly killed when air strikes hit their home in the village of Kasrat al-Shaykh Jum'ah in the rural west of the governorate.
- Also on 15 June, air strikes hit residential areas close to the non-operational Khalid Ibn al-Walid School in the Intifadah neighbourhood of the western part of the city of Raqqah, allegedly killing at least four civilians from one family, including a woman and her three children. On the same day, ground-based strikes hit residential areas and reportedly killed at least 7 civilians and injured no fewer than 14 others in the city.
- On 16 June, three civilians, including a woman and a girl, were killed as a result of ground-based strikes in the vicinity of the Nur mosque area in the city of Raqqah.
- On 18 June, two women and two children were reportedly killed and at least three other civilians injured as a result of ground-based strikes on the Badu neighbourhood in the city of Raqqah.
- On 19 June, two children were allegedly killed and seven civilians injured when air strikes hit close to the Imam al-Nawawi mosque in the city of Raqqah.
- On 21 June, air strikes hit residential areas in the Nur mosque neighbourhood of the city of Raqqah and reportedly killed at least 18 civilians and injured no fewer than 11 others. On the same day, ground-based strikes hit the city and reportedly killed at least 9 civilians and injured no fewer than 17 others.
- Also on 21 June, at least 10 civilians were reportedly killed and 3 others injured when air strikes hit residential areas in the Amn al-Dawlah neighbourhood of the city of Raqqah.
- On 24 June, at least eight civilians were reportedly killed when air strikes hit residential areas in the Rumaylah neighbourhood of the city of Raqqah.
- Also on 24 June, air strikes hit a residential house in the Nahdah neighbourhood of the city of Raqqah and reportedly killed five civilians, including a woman.
- On 25 June, three civilians were allegedly killed when an air strike hit their vehicle as it was travelling alongside the River Euphrates, south of the city of Raqqah.

Hasakah Governorate

- On 17 June, the Syrian Defence Forces reportedly held seven civilians for forced recruitment in the village of Harmun in rural Hasakah.
- On 19 June, air strikes hit residential areas in the village of Tall al-Jayir, located in the eastern Shadi area bordering Iraq, and reportedly killed at least 12 civilians.